

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 6 MARCH 2005

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications network of the South African Radio League that provides emergency communication to local, regional and national authorities, when requested to do so.

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IN THE BULLETIN TODAY:-

BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY EASTER WEEKEND AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS MEETING FEEDBACK ECHOLINK WHAT IF THE REPEATER IS BUSY?

HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz. KZN also have a Wednesday evening call-up and meeting on their 2M repeater system.

The National Bulletin at 17H00 CAT on 7,070MHz in the 40M band with a relay on 145,700MHz in the greater Johannesburg area.

The Gauteng North bulletin will follow immediately after the National Bulletin on 145,725MHz in the Pretoria area on Sundays.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province meets on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

The HAMNET Bulletin is sent to all those of whom I have an e-mail address and also sent out on packet by Rudi, ZS6DX.

Please note, this bulletin is available for download from the web site of the SARL under the heading "HAMNET".

EASTER WEEKEND AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

To think that just a few weeks ago, we were still enjoying our summer holidays and in the wink of an eye, the first quarter of this year is almost history.

Easter falls over the weekend of 25 to 28 March plus an extra holiday on Monday 21 March.

Inland schools close on 18 March and coastal schools close on the 24th of March, the day prior to the Easter weekend. By all accounts it s probably going to be a busy period on the roads and toll road authorities have very judiciously taken this into consideration by increasing all their toll fees around the country from the 1st of March.

However, should you be lucky enough to be going away at that time, enjoy!

Monitoring the 7:070MHz frequency will take place on the following days. I will appreciate it if the various Provincial Directors arrange stints among their members especially now that all the ZR licensed operators with HF equipment can join us on HF, it will make life a lot easier all round.

Sunday 20th March Thursday 24th March and possibly over the weekend itself on a daily basis. Monday 28th March Sunday 3 April as all schools start again on the 4th.

The Arrive Alive campaign will obviously be in operation over these periods and we sincerely hope that deaths on the road will be less than the same period last year. However, road death figures still seem to be hidden away somewhere by bureaucracy for reasons best known to themselves.

Listening around, it will appear that many people are taking the 3 days, namely 22 to 24 March plus the Easter week-end and turning it into a mini break.

I look forward to monitoring the frequencies with many Hamnet members.

Whilst we are on the subject of monitoring, my grateful thanks to Duncan Ratcliffe, ZR5DR for the generous donation of his old caravan to the Hamnet KZN team. From what I could gather, the KZN team are going to permanently park the old caravan within the Disaster Management Centre area as a "Hamnet Ops. Centre" with result that they no longer have to move equipment around when an operation is over. Well done and once again, thank you to Duncan.

Before we leave the Easter traffic situation, yet another number the travellers with cell phones can add to their list JAMLINE. This is a national road and or traffic situation number and information phoned through to this number, gets passed on to not only road users but also the authorities.

The number is 084 526 5463 or 084jamline. Please keep this number in your cell. Data supplied gets fed to all major centres around South Africa and also alerts road users if there is trouble ahead on rural roads. Alternatively, data fed to HAMNET will also be fed into the JAMLINE system.

LOCAL MEETING FEEDBACK

A very interesting presentation! What a pity more Gauteng Hamnet members were not able to attend and benefit from this presentation.

Once again, my thanks to Derek Jones, a highly qualified and very professional Paramedic, who tuned his presentation to fit in with the Hamnet structure!

Firstly, Derek gave us a rundown on the various courses available to any person who would like to become a qualified Paramedic.

He then gave us some stats on the HIV Pandemic with some very frightening figures. Suffice to say that approx. 3.83 million people or 8.2% of the current population are HIV positive and deaths associated with exacerbated HIV diseases total 1.49 million.

At one maternity section of a major hospital in Gauteng, the HIV positive figures could be as high as 40%.

It is also sad to note the scarcity of fully qualified Paramedics in South Africa. At present there are only 981 qualified Paramedics which make it one Paramedic for every 47,500 people in South Africa.

When an emergency call goes out, these are the available services at present:-

Public Service EMS s which have been Provincialized and also fall under Local Authority.

Private EMS Groups.

The Various Fire Departments.

Specialized Response Units like ER911.

Disaster Management and last of all,

Aeromedical response unit comprising helicopter and fixed wing aircraft.

Let s look at an accident or disaster scenario where you, as a Hamnet member, just happen to be the first to arrive.

Remain calm. Time is usually of the essence!

SAFETY of the situation at hand. Let s break that safety down into 4 S s.

S Self. Ensure your own safety. Park your vehicle out of the way. Make sure that you are in a position to convey information and not setting your own life at risk. S Scene. Survey the accident/disaster scene. Establish fatalities and people in need of medical assistance. Ensure other items (expanded more fully in the manual) like road conditions, flammable substance spillage, is help immediately available, gather data for sending on the EMS etc. S Spectators. Ensure, where possible, crowd control. Unfortunately we are all aware that people are ghouls and thieves at accident scenes and pilfer dead and injured bodies of valuables. Where possible, try and maintain crown control and ensure free access to the scene to the authorities when they arrive. S Safety and comforting of the injured. Please note, where patients are trapped in vehicles, do not try to remove them from vehicles. Leave that to qualified paramedics. You could, by removing trapped passengers, cause further injury to that patient, especially neck & back injuries. Also remember, it s only in the movies that cars explode after impact. In real life, less than 1 in a 1000 accidents will end in a vehicle catching fire.

Telephone numbers to remember. If possible, have these numbers permanently in your cell phone obviously where cell communication is possible.

082-911 084-124 10177 will automatically be routed to the nearest centre. 011 805-1005 For emergency helicopter evacuation of extremely seriously injured people. A word of warning! Under no circumstances should you request the deployment of this helicopter. Leave that decision to the qualified Paramedics.

However, you may phone them and ask them to possibly be on standby pending further instructions.

An unnecessary call will cost you in excess of R40, 000 if it turns out that the copter was not required. It costs a devil of a lot of money to fly that specific helicopter, not to mention time and energy wasted if the call was unwarranted.

Again, should you get a call via radio (7:070MHz e.g.) in an area where no cell phone communication is available, and you need to convey an emergency message, the rule is phone 1023 the Telkom Telephone Directory service and ask for the Police number in the nearest town to the accident scene and ask them to handle the situation from there.

One final point, if you were the first at the scene of a major incident and waited for the authorities to arrive, it is good protocol that you approach the new person in charge and advise him/her of the situation, who you are and your contact number should you be required at a later date.

We sincerely hope that this will be of value to you.

ECHOLINK WHAT IF THE REPEATER IS BUSY?

A potential problem was raised by an operator which needs to be looked at.

Quite simple, now that Echolink has been legalised, quite a number of repeaters may make use of their facility to link up with DX stations. What does one do when you get an emergency call and the repeater is busy?

It will be inappropriate to take over that repeater and may cause some ill feeling.

I suggest the following:- We either QSY to another repeater and continue from there. Alternatively, again depending on distance involved, one could QSY to a simplex frequency like either 145:500 or 145:225.

Please use your own initiative and discretion to avoid any unpleasantness.

PASSING THOUGHT

I wonder how many of you had the pleasure of viewing a movie recently called "Executive Decision". A story about a plane hijack and a rescue team being loaded aboard in flight noga!!

When all other means of communication had failed, guess what came to the rescue. Morse code! A crew member short circuited the rear landing lights by tapping a Morse code message to a following plane.

Fair enough, it can only happen in the movies, but long live Morse code!!

That is all for today.

Bulletin ends.